



MEMORANDUM

CITY OF WATERTOWN PLANNING OFFICE

245 WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM 304, WATERTOWN, NY 13601

PHONE: (315) 785-7730 – FAX: (315) 782-9014

TO: Norman J. Wayte II, Chairman, Planning Board

FROM: Kenneth A. Mix, Planning and Community Development Coordinator

SUBJECT: Site Plan Approval – 151 Mullin Street, Morgia Group Office

DATE: September 29, 2011

Request: Site Plan Approval for the construction of a 3,490 square foot office building and parking lot at 151 Mullin Street, parcel 10-15-115

Applicant: Patrick Currier, Aubertine & Currier

Proposed Use: Office

Property Owner: Cynthia M. Fearon Living Trust

Submitted:

Property Survey: Yes	Preliminary Architectural Drawings: Yes
Site Plan: Yes	Preliminary Site Engineering Plans: Yes
Vehicle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan: Yes	Construction Time Schedule: Yes
Landscaping and Grading Plan: Yes	Description of Uses, Hours & Traffic Volume: Yes

SEQRA: Unlisted Action	County Planning Board Review Required: No
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Zoning Information:

District: Limited Business	Maximum Lot Coverage: None
Setback Requirements: Front: 20ft, Side: 5ft, Rear: 25ft	Buffer Zone Required: 5 to 15 feet

Project Overview: The applicant is requesting approval of the site plan for the construction of a 54'x54' square office building for the Morgia Group. An existing house on the site will be relocated, and the existing driveway will be expanded southward toward the rear of the site in order to provide 15 parking spaces.

Pedestrian and Vehicle Circulation: The applicant proposes to keep the existing driveway and curb cut, connecting it to the new 15-space parking area. The existing driveway narrows to approximately 14' as it approaches Mullin Street, which is insufficient for two-way traffic. The applicant should widen the entire length of the driveway to 20' minimum. The curb cut must also be appropriately expanded. There is ample

space between the utility pole and the existing driveway edge to accommodate this widening. A General City Permit will be required for any work in the City's right-of-way, and a note describing City standards must be added to the plans (see summary item #2 below).

The current proposal depicts no dedicated pedestrian connection between the street sidewalk and the building entrance. The perimeter walk should be extended northward to connect with the Mullin Street sidewalk. This will save pedestrians from being forced to approach the building by walking in the driveway.

Drainage & Grading: The proposed building and parking lot will increase the impervious coverage of the site by ~6,100 square feet. Stormwater on Mullin Street is collected by a 10" combined sewer main. Proposed development may not increase stormwater flows into the combined main. The front lawn provides about 50 feet of permeable buffer between the new construction and the street—and should absorb a large amount of the additional runoff. Because most of the runoff from the new parking lot can be contained in the rear yard, the proposed site plan is acceptable, with two requirements:

- If roof leaders or gutters are installed on the proposed building, they must discharge to the rear yard.
- The grading of the proposed parking lot must be adjusted to direct runoff to the southeast, rather than the southwest as currently depicted.

There is some minor ponding evident in the asphalt near the western edge of the existing house. The applicant may wish to address this by resurfacing a portion of the driveway.

Landscaping: The site plan shows the proposed removal of one 8" Linden, one 6" Maple and one 6" Cherry tree. There are at least 15 other trees around the perimeter of the site that are proposed to remain and six Norway Spruce will be planted on the east side of the building. No additional trees are proposed in front of the building or around the parking lot, but the existing vegetation should be sufficient to satisfy the Landscaping and Buffer Zone Guidelines.

In addition to the Planning Board's guidelines, the Zoning Ordinance requires a 5'-15' landscaped buffer when a non-residentially zoned property abuts a residential zoning district. The applicant has provided a substantial buffer consisting of existing lawn areas and trees on the east and south sides of the parking lot and 10' on the west side of the lot. Additionally, the site plan depicts a new 6' high stockade fence along the southern property line and along a portion of the eastern property line. The existing vegetation should be sufficient to adequately buffer the residential properties but the applicant is reminded that the vegetated buffer and fencing will be an ongoing and continued requirement of approval.

As is noted above, there are several existing trees located throughout the site that the applicant is proposing to save for this project. In order to ensure that the trees survive the construction, we would recommend that the contractor be required to protect them during construction by installing some type of temporary construction fencing or other barrier that will protect the trees from mechanical damage from construction equipment. Significant root damage from compaction, grading or trenching as well as damage to the trunk and limbs of the trees from equipment could occur and without protection, decline or death of the trees could occur. This should be done for the front yard trees that are to be saved and for the trees in the rear yard that comprise the required landscaped buffer zone.

Summary:

1. The applicant shall widen the driveway and curb cut to provide a travel lane of sufficient width to accommodate two-way traffic (20 feet minimum).
2. The applicant shall add the following note to the plans: "All work to be performed in the City of Watertown's margin will require sign-off from a Professional Engineer licensed to practice in the State of New York stating that the work was built according to the approved site plan and applicable

City of Watertown standards. Compaction testing will be required for work performed in the City of Watertown's margin, and must be submitted to the City Code Enforcement Department."

3. The applicant shall extend the perimeter walkway northward to provide a dedicated pedestrian pathway between the Mullin Street sidewalk and the building entrance.
4. The applicant shall obtain a General City Permit for any work in the City's right-of-way.
5. If the applicant installs roof leaders or gutters on the proposed building, they must discharge to the rear yard.
6. The applicant shall adjust the grading of the proposed parking lot to direct runoff to the southeast, rather than the southwest as currently depicted.
7. The applicant shall add the following note to the plans: "All water main and service work must be coordinated with the City of Watertown Water Department. The Water Department requirements supersede all other plans and specifications provided."
8. As an ongoing and continued requirement of site plan approval, the applicant shall maintain the existing vegetated buffer and stockade fencing adjacent to all residentially zoned properties.
9. In order to ensure that the existing trees that are shown to be saved survive the construction process, a note and detail should be added to the plans that direct the contractor to install construction fencing or another barrier around the drip edge of each of the trees located in the front yard and for the trees in the rear yard that comprise the required landscaped buffer zone

Cc: Planning Board Members
City Council Members
Robert J. Slye, City Attorney
Justin Wood, Civil Engineer II
Patrick Currier, Aubertine & Currier